

REMARKS

Claims 11-22 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 11 and 12 are amended, and new claims 18-22 are added. Reconsideration and allowance of the present application based on the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the indication of allowable subject matter in claim 12. By this Amendment, claim 12 is amended to correct several minor typographical errors.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 11, 13, and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Nagahori (U.S. Patent No. 5,896,213). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 11 is amended to be more specifically directed to the embodiment represented by Fig. 5. The Office Action asserts that Nagahori shows a second optical coupler (circuit 7), which is disposed between an electro-optical converter (transmitter/receiver 71, 72) and a first optical coupler (splitter 3). Nagahori does not disclose a second optical coupler provided between the first optical coupler and the input/output ports. Thus, as each and every feature of claim 11 is not shown in Nagahori, claim 11 cannot be anticipated.

Dependent claims 13 and 14 are allowable for at least the reasons above and for the additional features recited therein. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nagahori et al. in view of Ishikawa (U.S. Patent No. 5,936,753) and Takagi (U.S. Patent No. 5,159,479). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Ishikawa is cited as teaching of providing a wavelength division multiplexing coupler in a sub unit, and Takagi is cited as teaching that electric signals converted from optical signals may be further transmitted to other elements via an antenna. Ishikawa and Takagi do not remedy the deficiencies of Nagahori with respect to the second optical coupler.

Therefore, claim 15 is not rendered obvious by this combination.

Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nagahori et al. in view of Korkowski et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,432,875).

Korkowski is cited as showing the use of optical connectors. Korkowski does not remedy the deficiencies of Nagahori with respect to the second optical coupler. Therefore, claim 16 is not rendered obvious by this combination.

Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nagahori et al. in view of Li (U.S. Patent No. 5,926,298).

Li is cited as teaching of several different embodiments of integrated coupler units. Li does not remedy the deficiencies of Nagahori with respect to the second optical coupler. Therefore, claim 17 is not rendered obvious by this combination.

New Claims 18-22

None of the applied prior art references discloses or suggests the combination of features recited in claim 18, which depicts the embodiment represented in Fig. 7 in detail. Claim 18 and dependent claims 19-22 are allowable.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, all the claims are believed to be in form for allowance, and such action is hereby solicited. Should further issues require resolution prior to allowance, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned.

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Please charge any fees associated with the submission of this paper to Deposit Account Number 03-3975 under Order No. 7874/280141. The Commissioner for Patents is also authorized to credit any over payments to the above-referenced Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,
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